

The Lamb of God and the Overcomers

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being an overcomer, following the Lamb wheresoever He goes, and having the life of an overcomer to have the power behind their testimony.

Duration: 54:19

Scripture: Revelation 14:1

Topics: "Spiritual Purity", "End Time Preparation"

Description

This sermon delves into Revelation chapter 14, focusing on the vision of the Lamb standing on Mount Zion with the 144,000, symbolizing the overcomers who are blameless and follow the Lamb wherever He goes. The sermon emphasizes the importance of being spiritually pure, confessing the name of the Lord, and being prepared as the link for Christ's return, highlighting the significance of experiencing God's grace and living a life of testimony.

Transcript

Will you please turn to the book of Revelation, Revelation chapter 14. We'll read from verse 1 through verse 7. And I saw and beheld the Lamb standing upon Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written upon their foreheads. And I heard a voice out of the heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder.

And the voice which I heard was of harp singers, harping with their harps, and they sing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders. And no one could learn that song, save the hundred and forty-four thousand, who were brought from the earth. These are they who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins.

These are they who follow the Lamb wheresoever it goes. These have been bought from men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was no lie found, for they are blameless.

I think verse 5 is enough. May we add a word of prayer. Dear Lord, how we praise and thank Thee that it is Thy mercy and grace that has brought us to this last full day of the conference.

We thank Thee for the past, and we look forward to the now, and we do pray, Lord, that if Thou hast still something to say to us or there is still something in us that needs to be dealt with, O dear Lord, this is Your time, and we just commit this time into Your hand and pray that Thou will open our hearts to Thyself.

Search us, O Lord, and know our hearts, and we do pray that Thou will remove every hindrance that may be still in us. Claim us, O Lord, for Thyself, that we may truly be the link that Thou art able to use to bring in Thy imminent return.

O Lord, how we long to see Thee face to face. We ask in Thy precious name. Every time I try to sing this song that we have just sung, I can hardly finish it.

It was written by Brother Bochman Lee. During the first two years of the communist rule in China, he tried to express his innermost feelings, and this is the result of that song. Thank God there is always a deep, deep longing in the hearts of the saints through every century.

We do not know how many prayers have been ascended through the centuries. The cry of the Church, waiting, looking, expecting the Lord's return, because He is our only hope. But years after years, century after century, it seems as if the Lord is delaying His return.

And yet we all know our Lord Jesus is more anxious than any one of us to return and claim us for His bride. And I think, again, we have to confess that it is because He could not come back to marry a bride that has not grown up, cannot be a companion for life for Him. He's looking for His likeness in His Church.

And still, I believe, brothers and sisters, from all indications, the time should be here. And He's looking for that link that will prepare His way for His return. I believe, brothers and sisters, it is the desire of our hearts.

I believe in every one of us who are His. We long to be that link. If in any way, by the grace of God, we can speed up His return.

I often feel that we are waiting for Him. But quite contrarily, He is waiting for us. Are we prepared to offer ourselves to Him as the link that He is waiting for? Hopefully, brothers and sisters, that even within our lifetime, He will return.

I really feel that way. But the problem is not just expectation. The problem, the real problem is, is there the link.

Are we ready to pave the way for His glorious return? So this is the burden of our hearts. As we say in the very beginning, that whenever God is going to do something, He always has His own way, His principle. And as we find in Psalm 103, verse 7, God has made known His ways to Moses and His acts to the children of Israel.

The children of Israel, they had to wait until God has done something. Then they saw and they glorified the Lord. But it was Moses who knew the way of the Lord and knowing the way, he is preparing the way of the Lord.

And that is what we are looking to the Lord by His grace to make each and every one of us here to be that way that God can use to bring back our dear Lord. Now this morning, we would like to look into another vision that we find in Revelation chapter 14. Now as you know, the whole book of Revelation can be roughly divided into two parts.

From chapter 1 to chapter 10 is one. And from chapter 11 to chapter 32 is another. The first part, we have the prophecy of how is it that the Lord is coming.

And it is governed by chapter 4, verse 2. In other words, the first part of Revelation is governed by the throne. Everything proceeds from the throne of God. It represents His power, how by His own power He is to bring to pass all these events for the coming of the Lord.

And then in chapter 11, verse 19, and the temple of God in the heaven was opened and the ark of His covenant was seen in the temple and there were lightnings and voices and thunders and an earthquake and great hell. In other words, when you come to the second part, it is governed by the temple, by the ark. And by that it means more than the power of God.

It means the glory of God. God Himself is working out His purpose for His glory. And the reason why we believe there are these two parts is because in chapter 10, verse 11, it was said to me, Thou must prophesy again as to peoples and nations and tongues and many kings.

In other words, in the first 10 chapters, we have already had prophecies concerning the peoples and nations and tongues and many kings. And there we find a chronological order of it. We have the seven seals, seven trumpets, and one succeeds another.

But then from chapter 11 and forward, it seems as if it does not follow chronological order. But God is taking out something that is deep in His heart that is going to do and emphasize these special events. So when you are reading chapter 14 of the book of Revelation, it is very hard, as it were, to pinpoint the time.

Even though we do have some hints about it. So to me, I feel Revelation chapter 14 stands out by itself. It shows us God's ideas, God's principles, what is in the mind of God and what He is going to fulfill.

Now the vision said, and I saw and behold, the Lamb standing upon Mount Zion. As we have repeatedly mentioned in the book of Revelation, it is the Lamb that is in the foreground. Our Lord Jesus, He was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.

Even though He was not slain and crucified until He was on earth and lived for 33 some years, and yet an eternity passed. In the thought of God, God has already made Him that Lamb, slain before the foundation of the world. In God's eyes, only the Lamb.

You know, as you read the book of Revelation, even when you go back to chapter 1, on the Lord's day, how John was in the spirit and he heard a voice behind him. He looked back and he saw seven golden lambsteads. But this is only the background.

The foreground is the Lamb, is one, who is like a son of man standing among the seven churches. So it is wrong for us, some of us, to consider the church as more important even than the Lord Himself. But we find that the church, however it is loved by God, is only the background.

The foreground is always the Lamb. God wants us to center our attention to Him. So here in chapter 14, it is the Lamb standing upon Mount Sinai.

You know, in chapter 5, we are told that the Lamb, newly slain, standing before the throne, and there he received from the one who sits on the throne, the scroll. The scroll which is the title deeds of the earth. Even though Satan seems to be the temporarily, seemingly, prince of this world, and yet we know God has never given up his property.

The title deed is still in his hand. And you remember in chapter 5 how the proclamation goes to the whole universe. Who is able to open the seals? That is to say, to bring the earth back to God.

And it is the Lamb, newly slain, standing because he's resurrected, and he is worthy to receive that scroll. And there you find he begins to open the seals. But here you find it is the Lamb standing upon Mount Zion.

And Mount Zion, as we know, is where? The king. Here our Lord Jesus has accomplished everything that God has entrusted him. He has fulfilled all the purposes of God, and he is now standing upon Mount Zion.

He is the victorious one. He is the king of kings and the lord of lords. He is the possessor of the universe.

But thank God we find he is not there alone. We find there standing with him 144,000. Maybe you're familiar with 144,000, because that number has been used in the book of Revelation before.

But you can see the difference. Because when you turn to Revelation chapter 7, you find 144,000 of the Jewish nation will be sealed. Each tribe, among each tribe, some will be sealed.

And that is to say God claimed them. God protected them. God kept them.

And these 144,000 will be those who will be kept of the Jewish nations, who will be kept through the great tribulation, that is Jacob's trouble. One day Jacob's trouble will come. It is simultaneous to the great tribulation of three and a half years.

So far as the Jews are concerned, it is Jacob's trouble. So far as the church is concerned, it is the great tribulation. But during the great tribulation, during Jacob's trouble, 144,000 of the faithful will be kept by the Lord through it.

But here you find again 144,000. But this is a different 144,000, because you find they have upon their forehead the name of the Lamb and of the Father. Now brothers and sisters, 144,000 is a full number.

It doesn't mean that there are only 144,000 and no more. It is the multiple of 12. So it tells us a full number.

In other words, God will have his full number of overcomers through the ages. You know it is very funny, because to Jehovah's Witness, they tell us that 144,000 has already been fulfilled. And if you join Jehovah's Witness today, you are a second class citizen.

But we know this is not an exact number. It simply means a full number. God will have his overcomers throughout the centuries.

And these 144,000 having his name and the name of his Father written upon their foreheads. To me, I feel it may mean two things. One is it proves that they belong to the Father and to the Lamb.

Another meaning is it is on their foreheads. They are not afraid to confess the name of the Lord. You remember our Lord Jesus said, if you confess me, one day I will confess you.

So these 144,000, that full number of the overcomers, they are those who are holy, the Lord's. And they are those who publicly confess the Lord. They are not so-called hidden Christians.

They are open to witness, to testify to the name of the Lord. So to me, I feel probably this vision of the 144,000 is a vision of the picture of the overcomers through the ages. And what will happen to them.

You find they are standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion. In other words, they are with the overcomer. They are considered as having overcome Satan, the world, sin, and their own self.

And then I heard a voice out of the heavens as the voice of many waters, as a voice of great thunder. And the voice that I heard was as harp singers harping with their harps. Now, brothers and sisters, we read in Psalm 27 that the voice of the Lord is upon the waters.

The voice of the Lord is like mighty waters. But here you find the same quality, as it were, of that voice. A great voice of many waters and as a voice of thunders.

What a testimony that must be. And they are harp singers, harping with their harps and singing a new song before the throne. Now, we all know that harp is heart music.

It is music that comes from the very depths of their heart. And the singing here is singing with their heart. I always feel there are two different kinds of singing.

One kind of singing is singing without a heart. And the other kind of singing is singing with the heart. In other words, singing is not just music.

Singing is something that comes from the very depths of their heart. It represents what is in their heart. And it is just like harp singing.

It's beautiful. It is not just noise. But there is depth in it.

And you find these 144,000 when they sing. They are harp singers. They sing out of the very depths of their heart.

And the Bible tells us no one can learn this song. Only these can sing this song. Now, of course, when we think of singing of songs, we can learn whatever song it may be.

And we can sing it even without our heart. But this singing is different. You have to learn it in your life.

Nobody can imitate it. Only those who have gone through. You remember David? He is called the sweet singer of Israel.

How he sang. But his songs came from his heart. His songs came from his life experience.

He had gone through so much. Persecution, misunderstanding, everything. And out of his life experience sprang forth these wonderful songs that we read in the book of Psalms.

And this is harp singing. So these brothers and sisters, the overcomers of the ages, they learned this song through their living. Thank God, brothers and sisters, sometimes we murmur and say, Lord, before we believe in the Lord Jesus, we find life on earth was difficult.

Many problems. And now we have believed in the Lord Jesus. So unconsciously we expect that from now on our life will be smooth and prosperous.

But after you really believe in the Lord Jesus, and you begin to live as Christians, you discover that this is not true. Probably you will even be surprised that your life becomes more difficult than it was before. Even the difficulties are different.

Now why is it so? And oftentimes we begin to murmur and wonder if the Lord loves us. If he loves us, why? He allows all these things to happen to us. But thank God.

In the book of Hebrews we are told because he is our father. He loves his sons. He will discipline his sons so that we may grow up to be partakers of his divine nature.

So here you find these Christians. They learn through experience. Brothers and sisters, I'm afraid it is a great temptation to those Christians who are intellect knowledgeable.

And because of that, we think we know everything. And we think that we have everything. But that is not true.

Even if we may know everything in our mind, it doesn't mean that we really have experienced these in our lives. So I feel in myself as well as as I travel and meet brothers and sisters, sometimes you find those who may not be as intelligent. And yet somehow you feel they really knew the Lord.

But other times when you meet believers, they seem to know everything. And yet there was very little in their real life. So I encourage myself and my brothers and sisters, seek to know the Lord by life rather than, now who are these people? The Bible tells us these are they who have not been defiled with women for they are virgins.

I believe this is not to be applied literally. I believe this is to be applied spiritually because we remember how in 2 Corinthians 11, the Apostle Paul said, I have expounded you to work as chaste virgins. The Bible never calls people in the world virgins because in the sight of God, they are adulterers and adulteresses.

Only those who are cleansed by the precious blood of the Lamb, they are virgins in the sight of God. So brothers and sisters, we are virgins. We have been cleansed by the blood.

And not only virgins, but we are espoused and as a chaste virgin. Even before her marriage, her life was governed by her future husband. Whatever she does, whatever she puts on, she will ask the question, will you please, my future husband? Her heart is already there.

And these are chaste virgins. But of course, when you read Corinthians, you find these Corinthian believers, they are virgins, and yet they are not chaste virgins because they have been enticed. And again, you find who are these people? These are they who follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes.

You know, when our Lord Jesus was on earth, he not only seeks and saves the lost, but he calls those who believe in him to come and follow him. Wherever he goes, they go. When our Lord was on earth, in the very beginning of his ministry, many follow him.

But you remember in John 6, when our Lord Jesus began to make it clear that they follow him not for him, but for the food, the bread that he provided for them. And when our Lord Jesus said, I'm the one whom you should eat and drink. My bread is drinkable.

My body is eatable. And they could not understand that it is by faith. And then many of his disciples left him.

So the Lord turned to his 12 disciples and said to them also, you are free to do whatever you want to do, but thank God for Simon Peter. He said, Lord, you have the word of life. We have believed thee.

Where shall we go? We are stuck with you. So brothers and sisters, these are God's disciples who follow the Lord wheresoever he goes. In other words, you do not choose your way.

The Lord is your way. He chooses the way. It is not for us to question his way, but it is for us to follow.

If he goes straight to the cross, then to the cross we go. Brothers and sisters, these are the overcomers of the ages. And then he says, these have been brought from man as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

So this is the description, the firstfruits. You know when you are planting a field, usually there will be the firstfruit and the harvest. If there is no firstfruit, then there will be no harvest.

Now, what are the firstfruits? Firstfruits are those plants that have received more sunlight. And because of this, they are ripened earlier. But whenever you have the firstfruits, you are assured that there will be the harvest.

So among God's people, you have also the difference between the firstfruits and the harvest. And these overcomers represent the firstfruits of the great redemption of our Lord Jesus. And in their mouth, no lie found, for they are blameless.

In other words, the word of their testimony. We are entrusted with the testimony of Jesus. But when we speak out, when we testify, will there be truth behind it? If we are testifying the testimony of Jesus, is the testimony of Jesus a reality in your life? We testify that he is the Lord.

Is he the Lord of our life? We testify that he is the first and the last. Now, is he the first in our life? Or someone else, something else, the first in our life? And he is the last. Is he the goal of our life? Is he everything to us? Our testimony has to be true.

And there, there will be power behind it. You know, it is very funny, when you read the book of Acts, I think it's chapter 18, you find how the seven sons of the Jewish high priest, they are exorcists. They are trying to cast out the demons in people's lives.

And when they saw what Paul had done, how he was successful in casting out demons in the name of the Lord Jesus. So they tried to use the same formula. And you remember that funny story how two of the sons tried to cast out demons in the name of Jesus that Paul preached.

And the demon said, Christ I know, Paul I'm acquainted with, but who are you? And he jumped upon these two men and they fled away naked and hurt. In other words, it's a lie. So there is no power, no strength.

Brothers and sisters, to be an overcomer, you have to have the life of an overcomer. And then you can have the testimony of an overcomer. You're able to speak out, and behind this speak out, there is a back, a ground, that truly what you say is what you are.

They are blameless, not because they are perfect. They are blameless because they know the preciousness of the blood of the Lord Jesus. Dear brothers and sisters, we will never come to a point when we are beyond the need of the blood.

The more you live closer to God, the more you treasure the precious blood of the Lamb. So these are the overcomers of the ages. I believe it is a picture that the Lord is trying to encourage us, that what the Lord is looking for, he will receive them.

He will have them. And then you find after the first fruits, in the same chapter, you have the harvest. So when you come to verse 14, And I saw and behold a white cloud, and of the cloud one sitting like a son of man, having upon his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sits on the throne, Send thy sickle and reap, for the hour of reaping is come, for the harvest of the earth is dry. And he that sat on the cloud put the sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped. And this is the harvest.

So here you still see the order. First the first fruit, and then the harvest. The harvest is referred to all those believers who have died before the coming of the Lord.

And also those who still remain upon the earth through the great tribulation. And they will be all raptured up to the air to meet the Lord in the air. As we have said before, that there will be the judgment seat of Christ, a family judgment.

And then immediately follow that in verse 17. And another angel came out of the temple, which is in the heaven. He also had a sharp sickle.

And another angel came out of the altar, having power over fire, and called with a loud voice to him that has a sharp sickle, saying, Send thy sharp sickle, and gather the bunches of the vine of the earth, for the grapes are now ripened. And the angel put his sickle to the earth and gathered the vine of the earth and cast the bunches into the great winepress of the fury of God. And the winepress was trodden without a city, and blood went out of the winepress to the bits of the horses for 1,600 stadia.

And that is Armageddon. So brothers and sisters, God has revealed to us what is going to happen. And he has also shown us who will be the link that will really bring in the king to prepare us for the day that is coming.

So thank God we are living in these difficult days. But on the other hand, we are living in a most exciting time. Because if the Lord wills, we who are here this morning have the chance of being raptured.

And that should be our blessed hope. So may the Lord help us. Shall we pray? Dear Lord, our hearts do cry out how long, how long.

Thy people have been waiting, as it were, for thee for centuries. And yet, Lord, it is not because of you. It is because of us.

We look to thy mercy and grace. We confess that in ourselves there is no strength. But thy grace is manifested in our weakness.

O Lord, we want to look to thee to strengthen us, to enable us to be used of thee to be that link that will really prepare thy way. Lord, we do not want to expect without being prepared. So prepare us, O Lord, that each and every one of us, none excepted, will offer ourselves to thee and allow thee to work out thy purpose in bringing back the King.

Hear us, O Lord. We ask thee in thy name. Amen.

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